

Amid record-low approval ratings for Congress, Blumenauer bill offers voters fairness in choosing their representatives

WASHINGTON – Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), a senior member of the House Budget and Ways and Means Committees, introduced H.R. 3846, the “National Commission for Independent Redistricting Act of 2012.” The Act establishes a nonpartisan commission that would oversee an independent, professional agency tasked with creating uniform criteria and Congressional district lines for each state that respects the communities of interest, and geographic, ethnic, cultural, and historic boundaries – rather than just partisan affiliation.

“In hallways and back rooms in state capitols across America, politicians are hard at work helping members of Congress pick their voters, so that for the next ten years, it will be harder for voters to pick their politicians,” **said Blumenauer**. “This system divides local communities of interest, resulting in districts that [look like](#)

[a raw egg has been splattered against a wall](#)

. It turns districts bright red and bright blue, making it harder to elect representatives with nuanced policies, rewards extremism, and makes it nearly impossible for the members of Congress they elect to reach bipartisan agreement to address our nation’s most urgent needs. This legislation will ensure that Congressional elections are more competitive and fair, and that voters get to choose their representatives. Now is the time to reform the redistricting process and act in a way that reflects broad public interests, rather than narrow and immediate partisanship.”

This legislation would establish the National Commission for Independent Redistricting after each Census, beginning in 2020. The Commission would be composed of national leaders with a proven commitment to strengthening our future, such as ex-Presidents, retired Federal justices, previous congressional leaders, and electoral experts from academia. The Commission would oversee an independent, professional agency, tasked with establishing uniform criteria and congressional district lines for each state that promotes competition and respects local communities, rather than simply consolidating and strengthening incumbent advantage.

The Commission would also inject greater transparency and accountability into the process by requiring robust public consultation and commentary that must be taken into account, and a website where all maps, hearings, votes with concurring and dissenting opinions, and materials would be made public in a timely fashion.

Congress would then approve or disapprove of the proposal put forward by the Commission with a simple up-or-down vote, free from procedural gridlock.